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(MS# 180498.1)
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IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for web initiated telephony between telephonic devices, the apparatus comprising:

a user computer, having a data connection to a web server, for initiating the web server to establish a telephonic connection between first and second telephonic devices coupled to a telephone network; and

a plurality of point of presence (POP) telephony servers, coupled to the telephone network, and coupled to said web server via a data network, said plurality of POP telephony servers for connecting to said first and second telephonic devices via both the telephone network and the data network upon a data command received from said web server via the data network;

wherein said data command is issued by said web server via the data network and via said one or more of the plurality of POP telephony servers to said first and second of telephonic devices in response to said web server being initiated via the data connection between the user computer and the web server by a user controlling said user computer whereby the data command results in the telephonic connection between the first and second telephonic devices via both the telephone network and the data network.

2. (previously presented) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said user computer comprises:

- a personal computer;
- a personal digital assistant (PDA); or
- a set-top box.

3. (original) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said data connection comprises an internet connection.

4. (previously presented) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said web server comprises a server on the internet, for receiving said initiating from said user computer, and for providing said data command to said plurality of telephonic devices.

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5. (original) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said telephonic connection comprises a voice to voice connection.

6. (original) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said plurality of telephonic devices comprises:

land line telephones;
cellular telephones; or
personal digital assistants.

7. (original) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said plurality of telephonic devices are coupled to said telephone network.

8. (original) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said plurality of POP telephony servers are coupled to said plurality of telephonic devices via said telephone network, and to said web server via a data network.

9. (original) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said plurality of POP telephony servers comprises:

conversion logic for receiving voice data and for converting said voice data to streaming audio for transmission over a data network.

10. (original) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 9 wherein said conversion logic further receives streaming audio over said data network and converts said received streaming audio to said voice data.

11. (original) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 10 wherein by converting said voice data to said streaming audio, and said streaming audio to said voice data, a two way connection between said plurality of telephonic devices is established over a data network.

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12. (previously presented) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said data command by said web server comprises:

a telephone number pertaining to a selected telephonic device to be called; and
an IP address of a selected POP telephony server.

13. (previously presented) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 12 wherein said web server provides a data command to each of said plurality of POP telephony servers that are to establish a telephonic connection.

14. (previously presented) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said user initiates said data command by selecting two or more of said plurality of telephonic devices to be connected by said web server.

15. (currently amended) A system for establishing voice communication between first and second telephone devices coupled to first and second telephone networks, the communication initiated by a user computing device coupled to a data network, the system comprising:

a first telephony server, coupled to the first telephone network and to the data network;

a second telephony server, coupled to the second telephone network and to the data network;

a web server, coupled to the data network and coupled to said first and second telephony servers via the data network; and

a user computing device, coupled to the data network, for making a selection of the first and second telephone devices for communication, and for providing said selection to said web server;

wherein, upon receipt of and in response to said selection of the first and second telephone devices from said user computing device, said web server is initiated by the user computing device via the data network between the user computing device and the web server to issue data commands to said first and second telephony servers to call the first and second telephone devices, respectively, and to establish voice communication between them via the first

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and second telephone networks and via the data network whereby said first and second ~~telephonic~~ telephone devices are connected via the first and second telephone networks and via the data network in response to a data command from said web server provided to said first and second telephony servers via said data network.

16. (original) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein the first and second telephone devices comprise:

- land line telephones;
- cellular telephones; or
- other voice capable telephonic devices coupled to a telephone network.

17. (previously presented) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein said user computing device comprises:

- a personal computer;
- a laptop computer; or
- a personal digital assistant.

18. (original) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein the first and second telephone networks comprise local telephone switches coupled to the first and second telephone devices, respectively.

19. (original) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein the data network comprises:

- the internet;
- a local area network; or
- a wide area network.

20. (previously presented) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein the user computing device coupled to the data network comprises a server with an IP address.

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21. (original) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein said first and second telephony servers comprise:

a data server, coupled to the data network, for sending and receiving streaming audio to and from said web server; and

voice/streaming audio conversion, coupled to said data server, for converting voice information to streaming audio format for transmission to said data server, and for converting streaming audio received from said data server to voice format.

22. (original) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein said web server comprises:

a POP database, for storing an IP address for said first and second telephony servers, and for associating telephone numbers with either of said first or second telephony servers.

23. (currently amended) A system for establishing voice communication between first and second telephone devices coupled to first and second telephone networks, said system comprising:

a user computing device coupled to a data network, for initiating the communication between the first and telephone devices;

a first telephony server, coupled to the first telephone network and to the data network;

a second telephony server, coupled to the second telephone network and to the data network;

a web server, coupled to the data network and coupled to said first and second telephony servers via the data network; and

said computing device for making a selection of the first and second telephone devices for communication, and for providing said selection to said web server as a data command via the data network;

wherein, upon receipt of said data command indicating said selection from said user computing device, said web server commands said first and second telephony servers to call the first and second telephone devices, respectively, and to establish voice communication between them via the first and second telephone networks and via the data network;

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wherein said web server comprises a POP database for storing an IP address for said first and second telephony servers, and for associating telephone numbers with either of said first or second telephony servers; and

wherein when said user computing device selects said first and second telephone devices for communication, and provides said selection to said web server, said web server determining which of said first and second telephony servers are associated with said selected first and second telephone devices.

24. (original) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein said web server further comprises:

streaming audio conversion, for converting streaming audio to and from other computer audio formats.

25. (original) The system as recited in claim 24 wherein said other computer audio formats comprise Real Audio format.

26. (original) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein said web server comprises text/speech conversion, for converting streaming audio to text format, and for converting text format to streaming audio.

27. (original) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein said first and second telephony servers are located in different cities.

28. (original) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein said voice communication between the first and second telephone devices is provided via the first and second telephone networks that are local to the first and second telephone devices, and via the data network for long distance connections.

29. (original) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein the data network provides long distance voice communication without utilizing a long distance telephone network.

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30. (currently amended) A long distance communication system for establishing voice communication between two or more telephony devices, each coupled to a telephone network, the communication system utilizing a data network as the long distance transmission medium, the communication system comprising:

a plurality of point of presence (POP) servers, each coupled to a ~~local~~ telephone network, and to the data network;

a web server, coupled to said plurality of POP servers via the data network, said web server configured to receive information associated with the two or more telephony devices for selecting one or more POP servers from said plurality of POP servers, and for establishing voice communication between the two or more telephony devices via the telephone network and via the data network; and

a user communication initiation device, coupled to said web server via said data network, for providing a data command associated with the two or more telephony devices to said web server and for initiating the web server via the data network to establish the voice communication between the two or more telephony devices via the telephone network and via the data network.

31. (original) The long distance communication system as recited in claim 30 wherein said POP servers comprise:

a data server, for sending and receiving data over the data network; and

a telephony server, coupled to said data server and to a telephone network, for receiving voice from the telephone network and for providing the voice to said data server for transmission over the data network.

32. (original) The long distance communication system as recited in claim 31 wherein said telephony server further receives data from the data network and provides the data to the telephone network.

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33. (original) The long distance communication system as recited in claim 32 wherein said POP servers further comprise:

voice/data conversion for converting voice to streaming audio format, and for converting streaming audio format to voice.

34. (original) The long distance communication system as recited in claim 30 wherein, upon data command from said web server, said selected one or more POP servers connect the two or more telephone networks.

35. (original) The long distance communication system as recited in claim 34 wherein if more than one of said POP servers is selected, the communication system coupling said more than one POP servers is the data network.

36. (original) The long distance communication system as recited in claim 30 wherein said communication initiation device comprises:

a telephony device coupled to said web server via a data network; or
a personal computing device.

37. (original) The long distance communication system as recited in claim 30 wherein said communication initiation device selected from a predefined list ones of the two or more telephony devices for communication.

38. (original) The long distance communication system as recited in claim 30 wherein said predefined list is stored on said web server.

39. (original) The long distance communication system as recited in claim 30 wherein said selected information associated with the two or more telephony devices comprises telephone numbers of the two or more telephony devices.

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40. (currently amended) A method for initiating voice communication between two telephony devices, utilizing telephone networks for local communication, and a data network for long distance communication, the method comprising:

- a) selecting via a user computing device the two telephony devices to be connected;
- b) providing by a data command from the user computing device via the data network information associated with the two telephony devices to a web server;
- c) associating local telephony servers with the provided information; and
- d) commanding from the web server that the associated local telephony servers establish communication with their associated telephony device via the data network;

wherein voice communication between the two telephony devices via at least one of the telephone networks and via the data network is established by the web server in response to said web server being initiated.

41. (original) The method for initiating voice communication as recited in claim 40 wherein said selecting is performed via a personal computer device coupled to the data network.

42. (original) The method for initiating voice communication as recited in claim 40 wherein the information associated with the two telephony devices comprises telephone numbers.

43. (original) The method for initiating voice communication as recited in claim 42 wherein said associating relates the telephone numbers to IP addresses associated with the local telephony servers.

44. (original) The method for initiating voice communication as recited in claim 40 further comprising:

converting voice data to streaming audio, and streaming audio to voice data to allow voice data to be transmitted to and from the two telephony devices over the data network.

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45. (previously presented) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 1 wherein said user computer selects first and second telephonic devices for communication and provides said selection to said web server via the data network, said web server determining which of said telephony servers are associated with said first and second telephonic devices.

46. (previously presented) The system as recited in claim 15 wherein said user computing device selects said first and second telephone devices for communication, and provides said selection to said web server via the data network, said web server determining which of said first and second telephony servers are associated with said selected first and second telephone devices.

47. (previously presented) The apparatus for web initiated telephony as recited in claim 30 wherein said user communication initiation device selects first and second telephonic devices for communication and provides said selection to said web server via the data network, said web server determining which of said telephony servers are associated with said first and second telephonic devices.

48. (previously presented) The method for initiating voice communication as recited in claim 40 wherein said web server receives an indication of the selected first and second telephony devices from the user computing device via the data network and determines the telephony server associated with each of said selected first and second telephony devices.